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ANCESTRY OF WILLIAM HOWARD TAFT



Ancestry of William Howard Taft

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William Howard Taft

ANCESTRY OF WILLIAM HOWARD TAFT

By
MABEL THACHER ROSEMARY WASHBURN



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I

T A F T

The first known American ancestor of the Taft family is Robert Taft, or Taffe, who was born about 1640. The date of his coming to New England is unknown, but he was one of the Braintree men who formed the new village of Mendon, Massachusetts, when the latter was set off from Braintree, in 1667. In 1678 he still owned a lot in Braintree, which he sold to Caleb Hobart, 18 November, 1679.

At Mendon he was a man of influence in the conduct of affairs. An indication of this is the title of respect given to him in the early records, for to be called "Mr." was always a distinction among our democratic forebears. He served on the first Board of Selectmen in 1680, and in the same year was a member of the committee appointed to build a house for the minister. This office, in the good old New England days when the minister was the great man of the community, was one of trust and dignity, and, in Robert Taft's case, it was also bestowed upon him because of his technical fitness, his trade being that of a housewright. In the necessities of the early colonies all a man's abilities were, perforce, pressed into service, and he who understood the carpenter's craft was a most useful

ANCESTRY OF WILLIAM HOWARD TAFT

citizen. So Robert Taft made not only houses, but, with his sons, built the first bridge across Mendon River.

He was a man of property in those early, simpler days, buying much land. The site of his homestead, facing a beautiful little lake, once known as "Taft's Pond," is still held by Robert Taft's descendants. Land of his holding was included in that from



which the town of Sutton was formed. Some of the colonists seemed to have regarded his prosperity with disfavor, for they complained of him to the General Court. The latter's action is recorded, 27 May, 1682, as follows:

"Touching Robert Taffe, the person complained of for irregular trading with the Indeans, that matter is wholly left to the County Court of Suffolk to doe therein as they shall judge meet unto whom the petiçoners may apply themselves for releife."

Robert Taft died 8 February, 1725. His wife, whose name was Sarah, died in the following

TAFT

November. Their sons were: Thomas Taft, who was born in 1671 and died in 1755; Robert Taft, born in 1674; Daniel Taft, born in 1677, who died 24 August, 1761; Joseph Taft, of the line of descent; and Benjamin Taft, born in 1684, who died in 1766.

Captain Joseph² Taft (Robert¹), the fourth son of Robert and Sarah Taft, was born in Mendon in 1680. He removed to Uxbridge when that village was set off from Mendon, and was appointed one of the "tything-men" at the first Uxbridge town-meeting, 25 July, 1727.

His farm in Uxbridge lay on both sides of Blackstone River, his homestead being on the west side.

He served as Lieutenant and Captain in the Militia, and continued to uphold the eminence of the Tafts as practically useful citizens. He died at Uxbridge, 18 June, 1747.

In 1708 Captain Taft married Elizabeth, the daughter of James and Sarah Emerson, who was born at Ipswich, Massachusetts, 6 March, 1687, and died at Uxbridge in 1760. An account of Elizabeth Emerson's ancestry is given elsewhere in this book. Joseph Taft and his wife had nine children, among whom were: Moses Taft, born in 1713; Peter Taft, of the line of descent; Joseph Taft, born in 1722; and Aaron Taft, who was born 12 April, 1729.



"Taft's
Pond,"
Mendon

Captain Peter³ Taft (Captain Joseph,² Robert¹), the second son of Captain Joseph Taft and Elizabeth Emerson, was born in Uxbridge in 1715. He carried on his farm and was a Captain in the Militia. It was perhaps this Peter Taft whose military record, making him one of the heroes of Bunker Hill, is given as follows, in "Massachusetts Soldiers and Sailors of the Revolutionary War."

"Taft, Peter, Uxbridge. Sergeant, Capt. Joseph Chapin's co. of Minute-men, which marched on the alarm of April 19, 1775; service, 11 days; also, Ensign, Capt. Edward Seagrave's co., Col. Joseph Read's regt.; regimental return dated Camp at Roxbury, May 18, 1775; commissions for said Taft and other officers received by Col. Read, at Watertown, May 24, 1775; also 2d Lieutenant, Capt. Edward Seagrave's co., Col. Joseph Read's (20th) regt., muster roll dated Aug. 1, 1775; engaged April 26, 1775; service, 3 mos. 13 days; also company return dated Sept. 25, 1775."

Captain Peter Taft married Elizabeth, the daughter of Josiah Cheney and Hannah Mason. She was born in Medfield, Massachusetts, 21 September, 1707. An account of Elizabeth Cheney's ancestry is given elsewhere in this book.

The sons of Captain Peter Taft and Elizabeth Cheney were: Henry Taft; Gershom Taft; Aaron Taft, of the line of descent; and Peter Taft, to whom it is possible the Revolutionary War record, cited above, should be applied, rather than to his father, Captain Peter Taft.

Aaron⁴ Taft (Captain Peter,³ Captain Joseph,² Robert¹), the third son of Captain Peter Taft and Elizabeth Cheney, was born at Uxbridge, 28 May, 1743. It would be interesting to know why Princeton College was selected for his education, rather than the nearby Harvard. His stay at Princeton was, however, but a short one, as he was needed at home, and one can pity the ambitious boy called from his studies to help in the conduct of the farm. His spirit did not, however, lose its ardor, for, as he left the grave joys of a scholar for the homely duties of a farmer, so, at his Country's call, did he leave his plow. In the "Massachusetts Soldiers and Sailors of the Revolutionary War," appears the following record, which probably applies to this Aaron Taft:

"Taft, Aaron, Uxbridge. Sergeant, Capt. Joseph Chapin's co. of Minute-men, which marched on the alarm of April 19, 1775; service, 15 days."

Aaron Taft removed, in 1799, from Uxbridge, and settled in Townshend, Windham County, Vermont. As he was the last of William Howard Taft's ancestors in Uxbridge, it is, perhaps, appropriate to speak here of an interesting episode connected with one of the Taft farms in North Uxbridge. This farm was, in 1789, owned by Samuel Taft, and here Washington stayed on his journey from Boston to Hartford, from which latter city he wrote to his host the following letter, charming in its kindly feeling and modest sincerity:

ANCESTRY OF WILLIAM HOWARD TAFT

"Hartford, November 8, 1789.

"Sir,—Being informed that you have given my name to one of your sons, and called another after Mrs. Washington's family, and being moreover very much pleased with the modest and innocent looks of your two daughters, Patty and Polly, I do for these reasons send each of these girls a piece of chintz; and to Patty, who bears the name of Mrs. Washington, and who waited more upon us than Polly did, I send five guineas, with which she may buy herself any little ornaments she may want, or she may dispose of them in any other manner more agreeable to herself. As I do not give these things with a view to have it talked of, or even to its being known, the less there is said about the matter the better you will please me; but, that I may be sure the chintz and money have got safe to hand, let Patty, who I dare say, is equal to it, write me a line informing me thereof, directed to the President of the United States at New York. I wish you and your family well, and am your humble servant,

"George Washington."

Aaron Taft died in Townshend, Vermont, 26 March, 1808. His wife was Rhoda, the daughter of Abner Rawson and Mary Allen. She died 9 June, 1827. An account of Rhoda Rawson's family is given elsewhere in this book.

Their children were: Milley Taft, born 29 July, 1769, who married Ezekiel Clark; Selina Taft, born 20 February, 1771, who married Jesse Murdock; Cynthia Taft, born 17 August, 1773, who married

TAFT

Nathaniel Butler; Rawson Taft, born 15 October, 1775, who died in 1776; Nancy Taft, born 20 August, 1777, who married the Reverend David R. Dixon; Zeruiah Taft, born 21 November, 1779, who married Major Willard Lovell; Mary Taft, born 12 July, 1783, who married Nathaniel Stiles; Peter Rawson Taft, of the line of descent; Sophia Taft, born 3 December, 1787, who died in 1843; Judson Taft, born 6 November, 1791, who died in 1794; and Samuel Judson Taft, born 4 October, 1794, who married Lucy Hayward.

Judge Peter Rawson⁵ Taft (Aaron,⁴ Captain Peter,³ Captain Joseph,² Robert¹), the eighth child of Aaron Taft and Rhoda Rawson, was born in Uxbridge, Massachusetts, 14 April, 1785. As a child he was taken by his parents to Townshend, Vermont. He taught for a time, later entering the legal profession. He became Judge of the Court of Common Pleas, the Probate Court, and the County Court of Windham County, Vermont. He was one of the Commissioners of the County, and for many years served in the Vermont State Legislature.

In 1841 he left Vermont and settled in Cincinnati, Ohio. Here he died in 1867.

Judge Taft married, in 1810, Sylvia Howard. Their son was Alphonso Taft.

The Honorable Alphonso⁶ Taft (Judge Peter Rawson,⁵ Aaron,⁴ Captain Peter,³ Captain Joseph,² Robert¹), the son of Judge Peter Rawson Taft and Sylvia Howard, was born at Townshend, Vermont, 5 November, 1810. He entered Yale College in

ANCESTRY OF WILLIAM HOWARD TAFT

1829, graduating with high honors in 1833, after which he taught for two years in Judge Hall's Academy at Ellington, Connecticut, and was also a tutor at Yale. He studied law at the Yale Law School and was admitted to the Bar in Connecticut in 1838. A year later he removed to Cincinnati, Ohio, and there entered upon a brilliant legal career.

In 1865 the Governor of Ohio appointed Mr. Taft to a vacancy in the Superior Court of Cincinnati, to which office he was also elected by the people for two more terms. He resigned, in 1872, his Judgeship and, with his two sons, formed the law firm of "A. Taft & Sons."

President Grant appointed Mr. Taft Secretary of War in 1876, and the following year he became Attorney General, holding that office until the close of the Administration, in March, 1877, when he resumed his practice in Cincinnati. In 1856 he was a delegate to the National Republican Convention which nominated Fremont for President, and the same year was a nominee for Congress.

In 1882 President Arthur appointed Mr. Taft United States Minister Plenipotentiary to the Court of Austria, and two years later he was sent to the Court of Russia. Soon after his arrival in Russia he became ill and was obliged to return to the United States.

Mr. Taft died in San Diego, California, 21 May, 1891, aged eighty years.

TAFT

He was twice married. His first wife was Fanny, the daughter of Judge Charles Phelps, of Townshend, Vermont, whom he married in 1841. She died in 1851. They had five children, three of whom died in infancy. The other two children of this marriage were: Charles Phelps Taft, born in 1843, who graduated from Yale in 1864, received a degree from the University of Heidelberg, was a partner in the law firm of "A. Taft & Sons," and later entered the field of journalism, being, in 1908, the owner and editor of the Cincinnati Times-Star; and Peter Rawson Taft, a graduate of Yale in 1867, who practiced law in Cincinnati, and died in 1888.

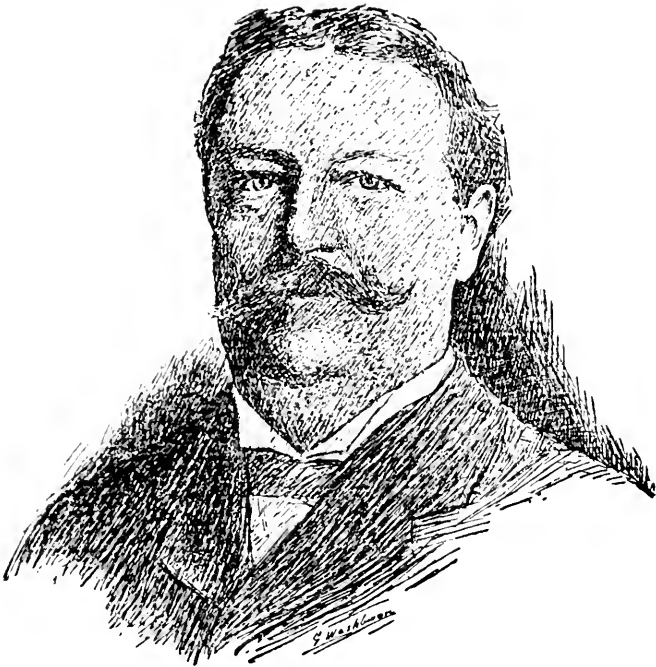
Judge Taft married, second, 26 December, 1853, Louisa Maria, the daughter of Samuel Davenport Torrey, of Millbury, Massachusetts. An account of the Torrey family appears elsewhere in this book. The children of this marriage were: Samuel Davenport Taft, who died in infancy; William Howard Taft, whose biography follows; Henry Waters Taft, born in Cincinnati in 1859, a graduate of Yale in 1880, and a prominent lawyer of New York City, being a member of the firm of Strong and Cadwalader; Horace Dutton Taft, who was born in Cincinnati, 28 December, 1861, graduated from Yale in 1883, was admitted to the Bar but left the legal profession to become a teacher, taught Latin at Yale three years, and, since 1890, has been head of The Taft School for Boys, at Watertown, Connecticut; and Fanny Louise Taft, who was born in Cincinnati in 1865, married Doctor William A.

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Edwards, and resides in Los Angeles, California.

The Honorable William Howard⁷ Taft (The Honorable Alphonso,⁶ Judge Peter Rawson,⁵ Aaron,⁴ Captain Peter,³ Captain Joseph,² Robert¹), the second child of the Honorable Alphonso Taft and Louisa Maria Torrey, was born in Cincinnati, Ohio, 15 September, 1857. He received his early education in the Public Schools of Cincinnati, graduating from the Woodward High School in 1874. In 1878 he graduated from Yale, with the degree of Bachelor of Arts. The same year he entered the Law School of Cincinnati, receiving therefrom, in 1880, the degree of Bachelor of Laws, and was at once admitted to the Bar of Ohio. For a time Mr. Taft was Law Reporter for the Cincinnati Times and the Cincinnati Commercial. In 1881 he was appointed Assistant Prosecuting Attorney, resigning the following year to become Collector of Internal Revenue for the first district of Ohio. This office he gave up in 1883, and resumed his legal practice.

In 1887 Governor Foraker appointed him Judge of the Superior Court of Cincinnati, to fill the vacancy caused by the resignation of Judson Harmon. At the expiration of the term he was elected to the same office, which he held for five years. In 1890 he was appointed by President Harrison Solicitor General of the United States, which post he resigned in 1892, then becoming United States Circuit Judge for the Sixth Judicial Circuit. He was chosen, in 1896, by the Faculty of



William Howard Taft

TAFT

the University of Cincinnati, to become Professor and Dean of the Law School.

William Howard Taft became the first Civil Governor of the Philippines, 4 July, 1901. Because of illness, he returned to the United States, but was sent, in 1902, by President Roosevelt, to lay before Pope Leo XIII. the matter of the purchase by our Government of lands owned by Religious Orders in the Philippines. This important and delicate affair Mr. Taft conducted with success, and then returned, in August, 1902, to the Philippines, to resume his Governorship.

In 1904 Mr. Taft entered upon the office of Secretary of War, succeeding Elihu Root. Toward the close of that year he was sent to Panama by President Roosevelt, to confer with the authorities there upon questions of government of the Canal Zone.

At the National Republican Convention of 1908 William Howard Taft was nominated for the Presidency of the United States.

In 1886 he married Helen, the daughter of the Honorable John W. Herron, of Cincinnati, District Attorney and State Senator. They have three children: Robert Alphonso Taft, born 8 September, 1889, and, in 1908, a Sophomore at Yale; Helen Herron Taft, born 1 August, 1891, and, in 1908, a student at Bryn Mawr College; and Charles Phelps Taft, born 20 September, 1897.

II

TORREY

William¹ Torrey was of Combe, St. Nicholas, Somersetshire, England, where he died in June, 1557. He was twice married, the name of his first wife being Margaret, and that of his second wife, Thomasyne. By Margaret, he had issue:

Philip² Torrey (William¹), whose will was dated in 1604. He married, first, Jane, and second, Margaret. By his first wife he had a son,

William³ Torrey (Philip,² William¹). He had issue:

Philip⁴ Torrey (William,³ Philip,² William¹), whose will was dated 21 April, 1621. He died in June, 1621. He married Alice, who made her will in 1634. They had issue:

Captain William⁵ Torrey (Philip,⁴ William,³ Philip,² William¹), who was baptized in Combe, St. Nicholas, 21 December, 1608. In 1640, he emigrated to America, and settled in Weymouth, Massachusetts. He served for many years as the Clerk of the House of Deputies, was a magistrate, and Captain in the Militia.

William Torrey was a true New England colonist of the finest type. Amidst the strenuous happenings and duties of pioneer life, he found time to devote to the study of Latin, and to write. An



Torrey House, Mendon. Birthplace of Samuel Davenport Torrey,
Grandfather of William Howard Taft

TORREY

essay of his, entitled, "The Futurities," still exists. He died in 1690.

The first wife of William Torrey was Agnes, whom he married in England, 17 March, 1629-30. She died before her husband emigrated to America, and he married again, but the name of his second wife is unknown. His youngest child was

Angell⁶ Torrey (William,⁵ Philip,⁴ William,³ Philip,² William¹). He was born in Weymouth, Massachusetts, but removed to Mendon. He had issue:

William⁷ Torrey (Angell,⁶ William,⁵ Philip,⁴ William,³ Philip,² William¹), whose son was

Joseph⁸ Torrey (William,⁷ Angell,⁶ William,⁵ Philip,⁴ William,³ Philip,² William¹). He had issue:

William⁹ Torrey (Joseph,⁸ William,⁷ Angell,⁶ William,⁵ Philip,⁴ William,³ Philip,² William¹), who married Anna, the daughter of Seth Davenport and Chloe Daniels. Their son was

Samuel Davenport¹⁰ Torrey (William,⁹ Joseph,⁸ William,⁷ Angell,⁶ William,⁵ Philip,⁴ William,³ Philip,² William¹), who was born in Mendon, 14 April, 1789. He removed to Boston, where he became a West India merchant. In 1831 he retired from business and made his residence in Millbury, Massachusetts. There he died, 23 December, 1877.

Samuel Davenport Torrey married, first, Delia Chapin, who died in 1821. In 1824, he married again, his second wife being Susan Holman, the daughter of Asa Waters, and a grand-daughter of Colonel Jonathan Holman, who raised and com-

ANCESTRY OF WILLIAM HOWARD TAFT

manded a regiment in the Revolutionary War. Mrs. Torrey died at Millbury in 1866.

The second child of Samuel Davenport Torrey and Susan Holman Waters was

Louisa Maria¹¹ Torrey (Samuel Davenport,¹⁰ William,⁹ Joseph,⁸ William,⁷ Angell,⁶ William,⁵ Philip,⁴ William,³ Philip,² William¹). She was born in Boston, 11 September, 1827, and married the Honorable Alphonso Taft, 26 December, 1853.

III

RAWSON

In the Fifteenth Century Richard Rawson was a merchant in London. He was Alderman of Farringdon Extra in 1475, and in 1476 the Sheriff of London. He died in 1483, and was buried in the Church of Saint Mary Magdalene, Milk Street, London. His wife, Isabella Craford, died in 1497. They had nine children.

The best known of these was Sir John Rawson, Knight of Rhodes and of Saint John of Jerusalem. He was made Prior of Kilmainham, Ireland, in 1511, and in 1517 Henry VIII. of England appointed him Privy Councillor and Lord Treasurer of Ireland. The Grand Master of his Order made him, in 1526, Turcopelier of the Knights of Saint John, and he later became Prior of Ireland. In 1542 the Royal Robber took from him Kilmainham Priory. It was claimed that charges of misconduct had been made against Sir John by his Superiors, but this appears to have been one of Henry's usual excuses when the possession of the lands of the Church was in question. The King, himself, perhaps wished to soften the effect on the public imagination of his seizure of the Priory, for he bestowed upon Sir John Rawson five hundred marks, and gave him the title of Viscount Clontarf. This title, since he was a priest, became extinct at his death in 1560.

Sir John Rawson bore arms: Quarterly, 1st., parted per fess undée sable and azure, a castle with four towers argent (Rawson); 2nd, or, on a chevron vert three raven's heads erased argent (Craford); ensigned all over with a chief gules and thereon a cross of the third.

Another son of Richard Rawson and Isabella Craford was Richard Rawson, a priest, who was Prebendary of Durnsford in Salisbury. In 1502 he was Archdeacon of Essex; in 1510 Rector of Saint Olave's Church, Hart Street, London; Canon of Windsor in 1521; and Vicar of Beaconsfield, Buckinghamshire, 25 July, 1525. His arms remained in the Vicarage of Beaconsfield, which he rebuilt, until 1728. He died in 1543.

Other children were Avery Rawson, a London merchant; Nicholas Rawson; Christopher Rawson; Anne Rawson, who married Richard Cely; Elizabeth Rawson, who married John Foxe; and Alice Rawson.

Christopher Rawson, the son of Richard Rawson and Isabella Craford, is, in the tradition of the Rawson family, believed to have been the great-great-great-grandfather of Edward Rawson, the Secretary of the Massachusetts Bay Colony. He was a merchant in London, owning Old Wool Quay, in Petty Wales, now Lower Thomas Street, this being an inheritance from his mother, Isabella Craford. He died in 1518, and was buried in Allhallow's, Barking, Great Tower Street, London. His first wife was named Margaret, and he married,

RAWSON

second, Agnes, the daughter of William Burke. His children were: John, Thomas, Richard, Margaret, and Catherine.

The established ancestry of the Rawson family in America begins with Edward Rawson, of Colnbrook, Langley Marsh, Buckinghamshire, a wealthy merchant, whose will was made 16 February, 1603-4, and offered for probate 4 May, 1604. He married Bridget, whose surname was, probably, Warde. Edward and Bridget Rawson had issue:

David² Rawson (Edward¹), a merchant tailor in London. His will, dated 15 June, 1616, shows him a man of charity to the poor, of family affection, and proves that he was, for the times, well-to-do. He married Margaret, the daughter of the Reverend William Wilson and Isabel Woodhal. The story of the Wilsons appears elsewhere in this book. Margaret (Wilson) Rawson married, second, William Taylor, of London, and died before 1628. A son of David Rawson and Margaret Wilson was

Edward³ Rawson (David,² Edward¹), who was born, probably in London, 16 April, 1615. In 1636 or 1637 he came to New England and settled at Newbury, Massachusetts. At once he became one of the leading men of affairs in the Colony. He was second Town Clerk of Newbury, being re-elected to the office every year until 1647. He served on various committees, was Selectman and Commissioner, Deputy to the General Court and Clerk of the House, and, 22 May, 1650, was chosen Secretary of the Massachusetts Bay Colony. To

this high office he was annually re-elected until 1686, when Andros appointed Randolph. Rawson's Lane, in Boston, where Edward Rawson lived, is the present Bromfield Street. He died 27 August, 1693.

Edward Rawson married Rachel, the daughter of Richard Perne, of Gillingham, Dorsetshire. She died 11 October, 1677. They had a number of children, among whom was

The Reverend Grindall⁴ Rawson (Edward,³ David,² Edward¹). He was born in Boston, 23 January, 1659. In 1678 he graduated from Harvard College, where one of his class-mates was Cotton Mather. He studied for the ministry with his brother-in-law, the Reverend Samuel Torrey, and preached at Mendon, Massachusetts, from 4 October, 1680, to 7 April, 1684. He then became the regular minister at Mendon. In 1692 he was appointed by the General Court one of the four ministers selected to accompany the Colonial troops to Canada. He, with the Reverend Samuel Danforth, was chosen to visit the Indians by the Commissioners for the Propagation of the Gospel, and wrote a "Confession of Faith" in both English and an Indian language.

After a ministry of thirty-four years in Mendon, he died, 6 February, 1715. The funeral sermon of this eminent divine was preached by the famous Cotton Mather.

Grindall Rawson's wife was Susanna, the daughter of the Reverend John Wilson and Sarah Hooker.

RAWSON

The story of the Hookers is given elsewhere in this book. Susanna Wilson was her husband's second cousin. She was born about 1665, and died 8 July, 1748. Among the children of Grindall Rawson and Susanna Wilson was

Edmund⁵ Rawson (Rev. Grindall,⁴ Edward,³ David,² Edward¹), born 8 July, 1689. He settled in Uxbridge, Massachusetts, where, for many years, he acted as deacon in the church. He married Elizabeth Howard, of Bridgewater, Massachusetts, and had a son

Abner⁶ Rawson (Edmund,⁵ Rev. Grindall,⁴ Edward,³ David,² Edward¹), who was born 24 April, 1721. He lived in Uxbridge, where he was a farmer. He married Mary Allen, the sister of his brother Edmund's wife. Their daughter,

Rhoda⁷ Rawson (Abner,⁶ Edmund,⁵ Rev. Grindall,⁴ Edward,³ David,² Edward¹), was born 4 October, 1749. She married Aaron Taft, and died in Townshend, Vermont, 9 June, 1827.

IV

WILSON

William Howard Taft is descended, through the Rawsons, both from a son and a daughter of the Reverend Doctor William¹ Wilson, who married Isabel Woodhal. (See Grindall.) Margaret² Wilson (Rev. William¹), married David Rawson. Their son was Secretary Edward Rawson, the first of that family in America.

Through a son of the Reverend Doctor William¹ Wilson, the line goes down to the Rawsons, as follows:

The Reverend Doctor William¹ Wilson was Prebendary of St. Paul's, of Rochester, and of Windsor. It is probable that he was the Chaplain of Archbishop Grindall, his wife's uncle. He married Isabel, the daughter of John Woodhal and Elizabeth Grindall. One of their sons was

The Reverend John² Wilson (Rev. William¹). He was born in 1588 at Windsor, and was educated at Eton and at Cambridge, where he entered King's College in 1602, and from Christ's College received the degree of Bachelor of Arts in 1605-6, and that of Master of Arts in 1609. He became a minister of the Establishment, was Chaplain to several families, and officiated at Burnstead, Stoke, Clare,

and Candish, in County Suffolk. Later he was installed as the regular minister at Sudbury, Suffolk, where he remained for ten or twelve years.

In 1630 he came to Massachusetts on the "Ara-bella," went back to England for a brief stay, and returned to New England. He was the first minister of the first church in Boston, and died 7 August, 1677. His will was dated 31 May, 1667.

By his wife, Elizabeth, he had issue:

The Reverend John³ Wilson (Rev. John,² Rev. William¹), who was born in England in 1621. He came to New England with his father, on the latter's second voyage, graduated from Harvard in 1642, and was made a Freeman in 1647.

In 1649 he entered the ministry, and was appointed to officiate jointly with the Reverend Richard Mather at Dorchester. He became the minister of Medfield in 1651, and died in 1691.

The Reverend John Wilson married Sarah, the daughter of the celebrated Thomas Hooker, the first minister of Hartford, Connecticut. (See Hooker.) Their daughter was

Susanna⁴ Wilson (Rev. John,³ Rev. John,² Rev. William¹). She was born about 1665, and died 8 July, 1748. She married, in 1683, the Rev. Grindall Rawson. (See Rawson.)

V

GRINDALL

In the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries, there lived in Hensingham, St. Bees Parish, Cumberland, a well-to-do farmer, named William Grindall. One of his sons was Edmund Grindall, the second Protestant Archbishop of Canterbury, whom Queen Elizabeth appointed to succeed Parker.

William Howard Taft is a descendant, through the Rawsons, from two daughters of William Grindall, this ancestry coming down in three lines, described more fully in the chapters on Rawson, Wilson, and Hooker, but which may be briefly summarized as follows:

I

William¹ Grindall, whose daughter, Elizabeth² Grindall (William¹), married Woodhal, and had issue:

Isabel Woodhal³ (Elizabeth² Grindall, William¹). She married the Reverend William Wilson, and had a son,

The Reverend John Wilson⁴ (Isabel Woodhal,³ Elizabeth² Grindall, William¹), who, by his wife, Elizabeth, had issue:

The Reverend John Wilson⁵ (Rev. John Wilson,⁴ Isabel Woodhal,³ Elizabeth² Grindall, William¹). He married Sarah Hooker, and had a daughter,

GRINDALL

Susanna Wilson⁶ (Rev. John Wilson,⁵ Rev. John Wilson,⁴ Isabel Woodhal,³ Elizabeth² Grindall, William¹). Susanna Wilson married the Reverend Grindall Rawson, of Mendon.

II

William¹ Grindall, of Hensingham, had a daughter, whose name is unknown, but who married John Hooker. They had issue:

Mary Hooker³ (. . .² Grindall, William¹). She married Richard Greene. Their daughter was

Rachel Greene⁴ (Mary Hooker,³ . . .² Grindall, William¹), who became the wife of Richard Perne, and had issue:

Rachel Perne⁵ (Rachel Greene,⁴ Mary Hooker,³ . . .² Grindall, William¹). She married Edward Rawson, the Secretary of the Massachusetts Bay Colony.

III

As has been shown in the first of the little Grindall-Rawson pedigrees in this chapter, William¹ Grindall had a daughter, Elizabeth² Grindall, who married Woodhal, and had a daughter, Isabel Woodhal. Isabel Woodhal, as outlined above, married the Reverend William Wilson. Besides their son, the Reverend John Wilson, the descent from whom of Susanna (Wilson) Rawson, has been described, Isabel Woodhal and William Wilson had

a daughter, Margaret Wilson⁴ (Isabel Woodhal,³ Elizabeth² Grindall, William¹). Margaret Wilson married David Rawson, and became the mother of Edward Rawson, the Secretary of the Massachusetts Bay Colony.

VI

H O O K E R

Arms: Or a fesse vair between two lions passant guardant sable.

Crest: A hind passant, or, in the mouth a branch leaved vert flowered argent.

Hooker ancestry enters into the Rawson family through two strains, and gives, therefore, a double Hooker line to William Howard Taft.

Under the chapter on the Grindalls has been shown the descent of Rachel Perne, the wife of Secretary Edward Rawson, from John Hooker and a daughter of William Grindall. While the connection of this John Hooker with the Hooker family of Devonshire, and his relationship to the Reverend Thomas Hooker, the first minister of Hartford, Connecticut, has not been established, it is believed that John Hooker was of the Devon stock, and that he was a near kinsman of the Reverend Thomas Hooker, and, also, of the famous Richard Hooker, author of "Ecclesiastical Polity."

The ancestry of Sarah Hooker, whose daughter, Susanna Wilson, married the Reverend Grindall Rawson, of Mendon, is as follows:

Jenaph¹ Vowell, of Pembroke, had issue:

Jago² Vowell (Jenaph¹), of Pembroke, who married Alice, the daughter and heiress of Richard

ANCESTRY OF WILLIAM HOWARD TAFT

Hooker, of Hurst Castle, County Southampton. For many generations from the time of this marriage, the family appear to have used, interchangeably, the names, Vowell and Hooker, or Hoker. The son of Jago Vowell and Alice Hooker was

John³ Vowell, or Hooker (Jago,² Jenaph¹), who had issue:

John⁴ Vowell, or Hooker (John,³ Jago,² Jenaph¹). He married Margery, the daughter and heiress of Roger Bolter, of Boltercourt. Their son was

John⁵ Vowell, or Hooker (John,⁴ John,³ Jago,² Jenaph¹), of Exeter, County Devon, "Gentleman." He represented Exeter in Parliament, and died in 1493. He married twice, his first wife being Agnes, the daughter and heiress of Richard Drewell, of Exeter, Esq., and his second wife, Alice, the widow of John Cole, of Topsham. A son, by his first marriage, was

Robert⁶ Vowell, or Hoker (John,⁵ John,⁴ John,³ Jago,² Jenaph¹), of Exeter, who died 9 August, 1538. His will was made 7 August, 1534, and enrolled before the Mayor of Exeter in 1538. Of his three wives, the first was Margaret, the daughter of Richard Duke; his second, Agnes, the daughter of John Cole; and his third wife, Agnes, the daughter of John Dobell, of Woodbridge, County Suffolk. By one of these three marriages, Robert Vowell had issue:

John⁷ Vowell, or Hoker (Robert,⁶ John,⁵ John,⁴ John,³ Jago,² Jenaph¹). He was born about 1525

HOOKER

the second son, and was his father's heir. He was, in 1565, Chamberlain of Exeter, and died 8 November, 1601, being buried at St. Mary Major, Exeter. He married, first, Martha, the daughter of Robert Tucker, of Exeter; and, second, Anastasia, the daughter of Edward Bridgman, of Exeter. She was buried 25 March, 1599, at St. Mary Major, Exeter. By her, John Vowell had issue:

Thomas⁸ Hooker (John,⁷ Robert,⁶ John,⁵ John,⁴ John,³ Jago,² Jenaph¹), who was the second son. It is not established beyond a doubt, but it is believed that this Thomas Hooker was he who died in 1635, and who was the father of

The Reverend Thomas⁹ Hooker (Thomas,⁸ John,⁷ Robert,⁶ John,⁵ John,⁴ John,³ Jago,² Jenaph¹). He was born at Marfield, Leicestershire, about 1586, and was educated at Market Bosworth Grammar School, and at Emmanuel College, Cambridge University. He received therefrom his degree of Bachelor of Arts in 1608, of Master of Arts in 1611, and became a Fellow of the College.

He entered the ministry of the Established Church, but his non-conformity with certain of its doctrines brought him into difficulties with the authorities. In 1630 he left England and, after a stay in Holland, and a brief return to his own country, he took ship for Massachusetts, arriving at Boston 4 September, 1633. He settled in Cambridge, whose association of name with his old University days must often have recalled to him bright dreamings of youth, and awakened new

ANCESTRY OF WILLIAM HOWARD TAFT

emotions of homesickness for the mother-land and strong purpose to do his work in the wilderness which was now his home.

In 1636 Thomas Hooker became the first minister of Hartford, Connecticut, where he died 7 July, 1647.

His wife's name was Susanna, and, by her, he had a daughter,

Sarah¹⁰ Hooker (Rev. Thomas,⁹ Thomas,⁸ John,⁷ Robert,⁶ John,⁵ John,⁴ John,³ Jago,² Jenaph¹). She married the Reverend John Wilson, and their daughter, Susanna Wilson, became the wife of the Reverend Grindall Rawson, of Mendon. (See Rawson and Wilson.)

VII

CHENEY

William Cheney was born about 1604. In 1639 he was living in Roxbury, Massachusetts, where he was an original subscriber to the first school, of which he was one of the principal supporters, being chosen a director in 1663 and 1666. He was a leader in the government of the town, as well as in its efforts to educate the children, and held offices of responsibility. He was a member of the Board of Assessors, 21 February, 1648; Constable in 1654-1655, and was appointed Selectman, 19 January, 1656-7. He was made a Freeman 23 May, 1666.

William Cheney died 30 June, 1667. His will was dated in April of that year, and proven the thirtieth day of the following July.

His wife's name was Margaret. Hers was one of those little tragic stories, coming down to us from the gloom of the early Puritan times, whose haunting shadows of terror and massacre, witchcraft and unloving asceticism—intrinsically alien to the cheerful self-denial of the Gospels, "*la chastité qui rit*" of the Saints—we are apt to forget in our just tribute of respect for the courage, the perseverance, and the humble recognition of God's Rights, which make all true Americans proud of their Puritan ancestors.

She had married William Cheney in England, and, whether its first cause was the hardship of life in the bleak wilderness, or just a woman's heart-sickness for her home in England, for the quiet country and the pleasant, simple ways (from which, in the early years of the Seventeenth Century, the afterglow had not quite faded from the time when our ancestors' land was indeed "Merry England"), we cannot know, but she became afflicted with a curious, hopeless melancholy, which lasted for more than ten years. In his will William Cheney speaks of his "deare and afflicted wife." We are glad to know that the poor soul finally found a way to happiness, although we hope some kindly neighbor comforted away the belief that in her past suffering she had been "bound by Satan," her loneliness a "sinful yielding to temptation." On 24 May, 1673, "Margaret Cheney widow" "gave thanks to God for loosing her chain."

Some time between the date of her recovery and 15 March, 1679-80, when, in a deed, she was called both "Margaret Burdge * * * widow," and "Relict of William Cheney sometime of sd Roxbury Decest," she re-married and became, for a second time, a widow. She was living in Boston at the time of her death, but was buried in Roxbury, 3 July, 1686. Her will was made 15 May, 1686, and offered for probate 23 September of that year.

A son of William and Margaret Cheney was Joseph² Cheney (William¹), born at Roxbury, 6 June, 1647. He was, in 1667, a legatee in his

CHENEY

father's will, and, in 1686, a legatee and the sole executor of the will of his mother. Soon after his father's death he removed to Medfield, Massachusetts. Joseph Cheney died 16 September, 1704, his will being dated the day before his death.

He married, first, 12 March, 1668, Hannah, the daughter of John and Margaret Thurston; and, second, 21 July, 1691, Mehitable, the daughter of John Plimpton and Jane Dawson, and the widow of Ephraim Hinsdale, who, after Joseph Cheney's death, married, third, Jonathan Adams.

Hannah (Thurston) Cheney died 29 December, 1690. By his marriage with her, Joseph Cheney had issue: .

Josiah³ Cheney (Joseph,² William¹), who was born in Medfield, 27 July, 1685. He died in 1754. His first wife, named Hannah, died 22 April, 1717. He married, second, Hannah Smith, a widow, the daughter of Ebenezer Mason and Hannah Clark.

A daughter of Josiah Cheney and his first wife, Hannah, was

Elizabeth⁴ Cheney (Josiah,³ Joseph,² William¹). She was born in Medfield, 21 September, 1707, and became the wife of Captain Peter Taft.

VIII

EMERSON

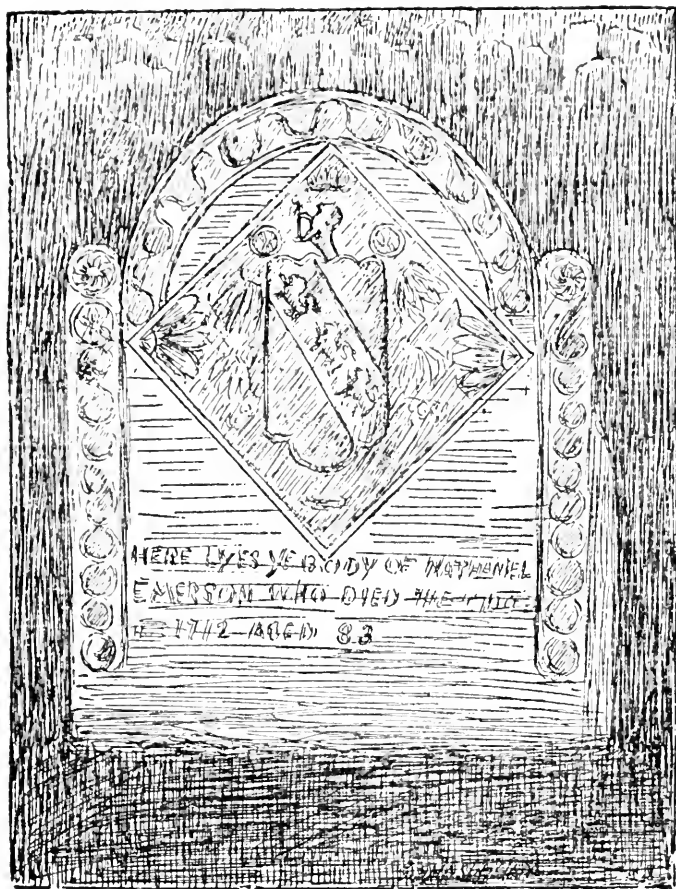
Arms: Per fesse indented vert and or a bend engrailed azure, three lions passant, of the first, bezanté.

Crest: A demi-lion rampant vert and bezanté holding a battle axe, shaft gules and head argent.

The Emersons were an ancient family of County Durham, England. The coat of arms, designated above, was granted to Ralf Emerson, Gentleman, of Foxton, County Durham, in 1535. It was carved on the tomb-stone of Nathaniel Emerson, a son of Thomas, the immigrant, indicating the descent of the American Emersons from Ralf of Foxton.

Thomas¹ Emerson was born, according to family tradition, in Sedgefield Parish, Durham, England, and emigrated to America before 1638, in which year he was granted eighty acres of land in Ipswich, Massachusetts. By his wife, Elizabeth, he had issue:

The Reverend Joseph² Emerson (Thomas¹), who was born in England, was in Ipswich as early as 1638, and was admitted as Freeman in 1648. He became a minister and preached at York, Maine, in 1648. Later, he was at Milton, Massachusetts, and was, in 1669, the first minister of Mendon. He died at Concord, Massachusetts, 3 January, 1680.



Gravestone of Nathaniel Emerson

EMERSON

His first wife was Elizabeth, the daughter of Robert Woodmansey, a schoolmaster of Boston. On December 7, 1665, Joseph Emerson married, second, Elizabeth, the daughter of the Reverend Edward Bulkley, of Concord, Massachusetts. She married, second, Captain John Brown, of Reading, Massachusetts. It is unknown which of Joseph Emerson's two wives was the mother of

James³ Emerson (Rev. Joseph,² Thomas¹). He was born at Wells, Maine, and became a tailor at Ipswich and later at Mendon, where he died in 1756.

James Emerson married Sarah, who died at Mendon, 13 October, 1732. Their daughter,

Elizabeth⁴ Emerson (James,³ Rev. Joseph,² Thomas¹), was born in Ipswich, 6 March, 1687, and died in 1760, at Uxbridge. She was married in 1708 to Captain Joseph Taft.

From Thomas Emerson, the immigrant, descends, in the seventh generation, Ralph Waldo Emerson. The great philosopher and essayist was thus a kinsman of William Howard Taft.



Silver Drinking Cup of Thomas Emerson
the Immigrant

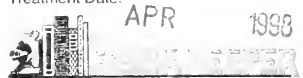
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